

# Native plants

for Pacific Northwest gardens



## Grow green

with planting ideas from  
Metro's mobile native  
plant garden



Metro

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Oregon iris, *Iris tenax*, page 15 (above).  
Checkerspot butterfly (right).



## Natural gardening is easy, safe and fun!

Birds and bugs are ready to help with your gardening chores...naturally. Simply make your yard a pesticide-free zone, and follow a few easy steps. Natural gardening isn't just beautiful and fun—it also protects children, pets, streams and forests from harmful garden chemicals.

### Plant right for your site

Why struggle with tender plants bound to lose the battle with pests, diseases, droughts and freezes? Pick plants that can thrive where you put them—without pesticides or fuss. Native plants like the ones described in this booklet are a great choice, as are many non-native plants.

## Use compost and mulch to build soil and stop weeds

Compost contains worms and other creatures that turn soil, dead plant parts and air into free fertilizer! Dig it in or spread it as mulch. Mulches also smother weeds and reduce runoff into nearby streams.



## Water less to save more

Choose plants that can thrive solely on rainwater after they're established. Just imagine: no sprinkling, fewer weeds and less pruning! For vegetables and lawns, avoid waste by using automatic shutoff valves or nozzles and keeping water off the sidewalk.

## Native plants are great for home gardens

Native plants have evolved over thousands of years, adapting to the local climate, soils and animals, so they can survive seasonal changes.

They also provide the best food and shelter for beautiful birds, butterflies and other local wildlife.



Meadowhawk dragonfly

## Avoid invasive plants

Invasives are aggressive, non-native plants that often crowd out natives for water, sunlight, nutrients and space. They're carried by wind, water, wildlife and people. Left unchecked, they can severely alter wildlife habitats, crops, stream flows and the diversity of life in natural areas.

## Many non-native plants are great for gardens, too

Food crops, medicinal plants and ornamentals come from near and far but usually pose no threat to native plants and animals. Contact Metro at 503-234-3000 for the latest information on non-invasive plants.



Seaside daisy, *Erigeron glaucus*, page 14.

## Great native plants for the Willamette valley

The following plants are ideal choices for nature-friendly gardens in the Willamette Valley. All of these plants can be seen in Metro's mobile native plant garden. Learn how to read the symbols in the plant descriptions on the next page.

### Plant icon key



Prefers full sun



Prefers partial sun



Prefers shade



Prefers dry soil



Prefers dry to moist soil



Prefers moist soil



Attracts butterflies



Attracts hummingbirds



Attracts beneficial insects



Attracts other wildlife



Oregon native plant



Anna's hummingbird



**Sitka spruce**  
*Picea sitchensis*



Evergreen tree  
125-200 feet tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Coastal conifer; great for erosion control



**Vine maple**  
*Acer circinatum*



Deciduous shrub  
10-20 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Red and white flowers in spring; showy fall foliage



**Shore pine**  
*Pinus contorta 'contorta'*



Evergreen tree  
20-50 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Coastal conifer; great for erosion control



**Blue blossom**  
*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus*



Evergreen shrub  
15 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Bright blue blossoms in spring and again in fall; shiny, dark-green leaves year-round



**Western hemlock**  
*Tsuga heterophylla*



Evergreen tree  
120-200 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Fairly fast-growing conifer



**Salal**  
*Gaultheria shallon*



Evergreen shrub  
1-6 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers May to July; edible berries in fall; handsome, medium-size shiny leaves; spreads by root runners



## Pink honeysuckle

*Lonicera hispidula*



Deciduous vine  
12 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers in summer; sparse foliage



## Red-flowering currant

*Ribes sanguineum*



Deciduous shrub  
4-10 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Early spring blooms feed hummingbirds and butterflies; fall fruit feeds wildlife; fast-growing



## Tall Oregon grape

*Mahonia aquifolium*



Evergreen shrub  
5-8 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Early spring blooms feed hummingbirds and butterflies; fall fruit feeds wildlife; holly-like leaves; spreads



## Woods' rose

*Rosa woodsii*



Deciduous shrub  
6 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers in summer; spreads



## Low Oregon grape

*Mahonia nervosa*



Evergreen shrub  
2 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Early spring blooms feed hummingbirds and butterflies; fall fruit feeds wildlife; holly-like leaves



## Thimbleberry

*Rubus parviflorus*



Deciduous shrub  
8 feet tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring and summer; edible fruit for wildlife; spreads



## Pacific ninebark

*Physocarpus capitatus*



Deciduous shrub  
12 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Clusters of white flowers bloom spring to summer; great for rain gardens



## Evergreen huckleberry

*Vaccinium ovatum*



Evergreen shrub  
8 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers spring to summer; edible fruit for wildlife; great foliage plant; slow-growing



## Red huckleberry *Vaccinium parvifolium*



Deciduous shrub  
10 feet tall  
Moderately hard to grow

White flowers spring to summer; edible fruit  
for wildlife



## High bush cranberry *Viburnum trilobum*



Deciduous shrub  
10-15 feet tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring to summer; fall fruit  
feeds wildlife



# Perennials, annuals and groundcovers

## Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*



Perennial  
1-2 feet tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring to fall; can spread quickly



## Maidenhair fern *Adiantum pedatum*



Perennial  
10-30 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Delicate foliage; grows well alongside streams



## Nodding onion *Allium cernuum*



Perennial  
6-20 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers in summer; great for rock gardens



**Pearly everlasting**  
*Anaphalis margaritacea*



Perennial  
1-4 feet tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers summer to fall; silver-gray foliage; spreads easily



**Douglas aster**  
*Aster subspicatus*



Perennial  
1-4 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Purple flowers summer to fall; great for rain gardens



**Red columbine**  
*Aquilegia formosa*



Perennial  
3 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Spring and summer blooms feed hummingbirds and butterflies; great for rain gardens



**Coyote bush**  
*Baccharis pilularis*



Evergreen shrub  
10 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Inconspicuous white flowers late summer to early winter; small light-green leaves



**Kinnikinnick**  
*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*



Evergreen groundcover  
5-8 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers mid-spring to early summer; edible berries provide food for wildlife



**Deer fern**  
*Blechnum spicant*



Evergreen perennial  
3 feet tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Great for shady rain gardens



**Wild ginger**  
*Asarum caudatum*



Perennial groundcover  
6 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Beautiful spring flowers hidden under heart-shaped leaves; edible roots



**Large boykinia**  
*Boykinia major*



Perennial  
1-3 feet tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers summer to fall; great for woodland gardens



**Camas**  
*Camassia quamash*



Perennial  
30 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Purple spring flowers; great for rain gardens



**Slough sedge**  
*Carex obnupta*



Evergreen perennial  
2-3 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Grasslike, with inconspicuous brown flowers  
spring to summer; great for erosion control;  
spreads easily



**Pacific bleeding heart**  
*Dicentra formosa*



Perennial  
1 foot tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers spring to summer; spreads  
by seed



**Henderson's shooting star**  
*Dodecatheon hendersonii*



Perennial  
1 foot tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers spring to summer; great for rain  
gardens or rock gardens



**Mountain avens**  
*Dryas octopetala*



Evergreen groundcover  
4-8 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White summer-blooming flowers; great for  
rock gardens



**Seaside daisy**  
*Erigeron glaucus*



Evergreen perennial  
1-2 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Showy light-purple flowers spring to fall;  
spreads easily



**White fawn lily**  
*Erythronium oregonum*



Perennial  
1 foot tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Showy white spring blooms; great for  
woodland gardens



**Coastal strawberry**  
*Fragaria chiloensis*



Evergreen groundcover  
4 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring to summer; edible fruit  
for wildlife; spreads easily



**Oregon wintergreen**  
*Gaultheria ovatifolia*



Evergreen groundcover  
3 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Pink bell-shaped flowers in summer; edible fruit for wildlife; great for rain gardens



**Douglas' meadowfoam**  
*Limnanthes douglasii*



Annual  
16 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Yellow and white spring flowers; great for rain gardens



**Small-flowered alumroot**  
*Heuchera micrantha*



Evergreen perennial  
6-24 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring to summer; great for rain gardens



**Stream-bank lupine**  
*Lupinus rivularis*



Perennial  
3 feet tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Purple-blue spring blossoms; great for rain gardens



**Oregon iris**  
*Iris tenax*



Perennial  
4-20 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Purple blooms in spring; great for rain gardens



**False lily of the valley**  
*Maianthemum dilatatum*



Perennial  
1 foot tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring to summer; spreads



**Common rush**  
*Juncus effusus*



Evergreen perennial  
1-3 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Grasslike, with inconspicuous brown flowers during the summer; great for rain gardens



**Yellow monkey flower**  
*Mimulus guttatus*



Perennial  
2 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Yellow flowers bloom spring to summer; great for rain gardens; spreads



## Redwood sorrel

*Oxalis oregana*



Perennial groundcover  
6 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White blooms in spring; great groundcover for dry shade; spreads



## Richardson's penstemon

*Penstemon richardsonii*



Perennial  
12-34 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Pinkish blooms later summer to fall; great for rock gardens



## Cascade penstemon

*Penstemon serrulatus*



Perennial  
1-2 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Purple blooms in summer; nice cut flowers; good for rain gardens



## Coltsfoot

*Petasites palmatus*



Perennial  
4-20 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White spring blooms; spreads by root runners



## Spreading phlox

*Phlox diffusa*



Evergreen perennial  
4 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers in spring; great for rock gardens



## Licorice fern

*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*



Evergreen perennial  
6-12 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Edible roots taste like licorice; grows well with moss



## Sword fern

*Polystichum munitum*



Evergreen perennial  
2-5 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Beautiful leaves with a dramatic shape; thrives in most conditions



## Pacific silverweed

*Potentilla pacifica*



Perennial groundcover  
6 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Yellow blooms spring to summer; great for rain gardens



## Rusty-hair saxifrage

*Saxifraga rufidula*



Perennial  
8 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers bloom spring to summer; great for woodland gardens



## Yellow-eyed grass

*Sisyrinchium californicum*



Perennial  
8-20 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Yellow spring flowers on grasslike foliage; great for rain gardens



## Oregon stonecrop

*Sedum oreganum*



Evergreen groundcover  
3-6 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Succulent with summer-blooming yellow flowers; great for rock gardens



## Grass widow

*Sisyrinchium douglasii*



Perennial  
4-16 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Reddish-purple spring blossoms on grasslike foliage; great for rain gardens



## Broadleaf stonecrop

*Sedum spathulifolium*



Evergreen groundcover  
2-8 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Succulent with yellow flowers spring to summer; great for rock gardens



## False Solomon's seal

*Smilacina racemosa*



Perennial  
12-37 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Clusters of white flowers spring to summer; fragrant



## Blue-eyed grass

*Sisyrinchium bellum*



Perennial  
8-12 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Blue blossoms spring to summer on grasslike foliage; great for rain gardens



## Starry false Solomon's seal

*Smilacina stellata*



Perennial  
1-2 feet tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers spring to summer; great for woodland gardens



## Goldenrod

*Solidago canadensis*



Perennial  
2-5 feet tall  
Easy to grow

Clusters of yellow flowers summer to fall;  
spreads



## Piggyback plant

*Tolmiea menziesii*



Perennial  
12-30 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Maroon flowers bloom spring to summer;  
spreads



## Spring queen

*Synthyris reniformis*



Perennial  
2-6 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

Purple blossoms late winter to spring; great  
for woodland gardens



## Western trillium

*Trillium ovatum*



Perennial  
4-18 inches tall  
Moderately hard to grow

White flowers in spring; great for woodland  
gardens



## Fringe cup

*Tellima grandiflora*



Perennial  
15-34 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Pink flowers bloom spring to summer; spreads



## Inside-out flower

*Vancouveria hexandra*



Perennial  
8-16 inches tall  
Easy to grow

White flowers bloom spring to summer; great  
for woodland gardens



## Western meadow rue

*Thalictrum occidentale*



Perennial  
12-40 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Pink and green flowers bloom spring to  
summer; requires male and female plants if  
seed production desired



## Early blue violet

*Viola adunca*



Perennial  
4 inches tall  
Easy to grow

Purple flowers bloom spring to summer; great  
for rain gardens; spreads







Western trillium, *Trillium ovatum*, page 22.

## Botanical references

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## Metro natural gardening resources



Mobile native plant garden for community events

Free presentations, publications, events and online information

Compost bins for sale at deep discount at MetroPaint Store in Portland

Oregon Zoo Backyard Makeover exhibit for welcoming wildlife

Metro GreenScene, a quarterly calendar of nature activities

Call **503-234-3000** or visit **[www.oregonmetro.gov/garden](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/garden)**

## Other resources

Naturescaping workshops (free), 503-222-SOIL, [www.naturescape.org](http://www.naturescape.org)

Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, [www.pesticide.org](http://www.pesticide.org)

OSU Extension Service Metro Area Master Gardener Help Line, 503-821-1150 (Westside), 503-655-8631 (Eastside)

Regional Water Providers Consortium, 503-823-7528, [www.conserveh2o.org](http://www.conserveh2o.org)

Plant Native, [www.plantnative.org](http://www.plantnative.org)



Plant description photos by Paul Sanford  
Cover photo: Ladybug on lupine flower

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## Invite Metro's mobile native plant garden to your community event



Learn about native plant gardening from Metro's native plant mobile garden. The 6-foot-by-14-foot garden features more than 60 plant species that are native to the Pacific Northwest.

Metro's natural gardening educators can bring the mobile garden to community events in the Portland metropolitan area. Visit our mobile garden and talk with an expert about gardening with native plants. Come see beautiful native plants on display and take home a variety of natural gardening brochures.

To request the mobile garden for your event, call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000.



Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

### Your Metro representatives

Metro Council President – David Bragdon

Metro Councilors – Rod Park, District 1; Carlotta Collette, District 2;

Carl Hosticka, District 3; Kathryn Harrington, District 4; Rex Burkholder, District 5; Robert Liberty, District 6.

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